

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00

INT-05 FEA-01 OES-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

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R 291550Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5265

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USMISSION USUN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR MO AG

SUBJECT: ISTIQLAL ATTACKS ALGERIANS ON SAHARA ISSUE:
MOROCCAN/ALGERIAN RELATIONS IN DECLINE?

REF: A. RABAT 1992 (NOTAL); B. CAIRO 4222 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: ISTIQLAL PARTY PRESS HAS UNLEASHED VITUPERATIVE
ATTACK IN ITS PRESS ON ALGERIAN ATTITUDE ON SAHARA.

ALGERIANS HERE STUNG BY BARRAGE AND BELIEVE MOROCCANS
ATTEMPTING TO IGNORE SAHARAN SELF-DETERMINATION PRINCIPLE.
ALTHOUGH SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS HAS NOT ECHOED ISTIQLAL

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CHARGES, THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT MOROCCANS AND ALGERIANS

CLASHED ON SAHARA QUESTION AT RECENT ARAB LEAGUE FON MINS MEETING AND THAT ALREADY COOL RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES MAY BE DETERIORATING. END SUMMARY.

2. PAST FEW DAYS HAVE WITNESSED HEAVY CRITICISM OF ALGERIA ON SAHARA ISSUE BY NON-GOVERNMENT ISTIQLAL PARTY PRESS. ON APRIL 26, ISTIQLAL'S FRENCH LANGUAGE DAILY, L'OPINION, CARRIED FRONT-PAGE STORY UNDER HEADLINE "ARE RELATIONS BETWEEN RABAT AND ALGIERS IN AN IMPASSE?" ARTICLE STRONGLY CRITICIZED INVITATION TO VISIT ALGIERS EXTENDED TO UN MISSION WHICH WILL EXAMINE SAHARA QUESTION IN SITU NEXT MONTH. HOW, PAPER WONDERED, COULD "NON INTERESTED" PARY TAKE SUCH STEP AND ALSO ASK TO PRESENT ITS CASE BEFORE ICJ. PAPER ALSO CHARGED THAT ALGERIANS HAD INDUCED UAE TO REDUCE ITS OFFER OF FINANCING TO MOROCCAN REFINERY FROM \$25 TO \$7.5 MILLION.

3. PAPER ALSO NOTED THAT KING HASSAN HAD SENT TWO MESSAGES TO PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE DURING APRIL, FIRST VIA PHOSPHATES OFFICE PRESIDENT KARIM-LAMRANI ON APRIL 8 AND SECOND ON APRIL 22 THROUGH MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR TO ALGIERS, AHMED SENOUSI. THESE DOCUMENTS, PAPER SPECULATED, HAD DEALT WITH TOTALITY OF MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN RELATIONS, INCLUDING PROPOSED JOINT EXPLOITATION OF GARA-JEBILET IRON RESERVES, AND INDICATED POSSIBILITY OF CRISIS IN RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES.

4. FOREGOING STORY ACCOMPANIED BY HEAVY CRITICISM OF ALGERIAN ATTITUDE, BOTH VERBALLY BY ISTIQLAL SECRETARY GENERAL BOUCETTA AND EDITORIAL BY PARTY'S ARABIC LANGUAGE DAILY.

5. SECOND ITEM OF INTEREST WAS REPORT IN APRIL 25 EDITION OF SOCIALIST UNION'S ARABIC LANGUAGE DAILY, AL MOHARRIR, THAT FONMIN LARAKI HAD CLASHED WITH ALGERIAN FONMIN BOUTEFLIKA OVER SAHARA ISSUE AT RECENTLY CONCLUDED MEETING OF ARAB LEAGUE FONMINS IN CAIRO. BOUTEFLIKA, PAPER SAID, HAD PROTESTED MOROCCO'S "EXPANSIONIST DESIGNS" ON SAHARA AND HAD DEMANDED THAT SAHARANS BE ALLOWED TO DETERMINE OWN DESTINY.

6. HARSHTEST ISTIQLAL ATTACK ON ALGERIANS CAME IN L'OPINION EDITORIAL APRIL 29. PIECE BEGAN BY CLAIMING THAT ARAB LEAGUE FONMINS HAD CONDEMNED SPAIN'S OCCUPATION OF MOROCCAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ENCLAVES BUT HAD FAILED TO PASS RESOLUTION ON SAHARA. (REFTEL B APPEARS TO REFUTE THIS CONTENTION.) PAPER CLAIMED THAT BOUTEFLIKA HAD "DENIED DECLARATIONS OF HIS CHIEF OF STATE" AND RESOLUTIONS TO WHICH LATTER HAD SUBSCRIBED, AND HAD CALLED FOR CREATION OF "PUPPET STATE" IN SAHARA. BOUTEFLIKA, L'OPINION SAID, ARGUED THAT HIS CHIEF HAD NOT CONSULTED HIM WHEN HE SUBSCRIBED TO INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTIONS ON SAHARA, AND PAPER ADDED THAT BOUTEFLIKA REJECTED THESE DOCUMENTS, CHARACTERIZING

THEM AS "PAPERS". L'OPINION FOUND THESE TACTICS REMINISCENT OF THOSE OF "EUROPEAN MINISTERS AND CHIEFS OF STATE" OF THIRTIES WHOSE EXPANSIONISM HAD BROUGHT CATASTROPHE TO THE WORLD.

7. ALGERIAN EMBASSY HERE HAS INDICATED TO US PRIVATELY THAT IT DISMAYED AND ANGERED BY MOROCCAN ATTITUDE IN GENERAL AND ISTIQLAL ATTACKS IN PARTICULAR. ALGERIANS SAY MOROCCANS BELIEVE THAT MAURITANIANS NOW IN RABAT'S CAMP, AND GOM THEREFORE ATTEMPTING TO IGNORE WIDESPREAD AGREEMENT THAT ALGERIANS CONSIDER STILL EXISTS ON PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR SAHARANS. ALGERIANS HERE SAY THAT BOUTEFLIKA MERELY REITERATED THIS POINT AT CAIRO MEETING.

8. EXTREMIST ISTIQLAL RHETORIC, ALGERIANS NOTE, FURTHER MUDDIES WATERS. BOUCETTA, THEY POINT OUT, SAW KING RECENTLY, AND MAY, THEY SAY, HAVE LAUNCHED ANTI-ALGERIAN ATTACKS WITH PALACE BLESSING OR EVEN UNDER INSTRUCTIONS.

9. COMMENT: ISTIQLAL'S FERVOR HAS NOT BEEN ECHOED IN SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS, WHICH HAS NOT MENTIONED ALGERIAN CONNECTION IN RECENT DAYS. NEVERTHELESS, "UNLEASHING" OF ISTIQLAL, REPORTED LARAKI-BOUTEFLIKA CLASH, AND THE TWO MESSAGES FROM KING TO BOUMEDIENE INDICATE THAT NORMALLY COOL RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES MAY BE DETERIORATING. ISTIQLAL LEADER'S COMMENT THAT ALGERIANS HOSTILE TO GOM'S SAHARA INITIATIVE (REFTEL A) BEARS OUT THIS CONTENTION.

10. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ANY INFORMATION INFO ADDRESSEES MAY DEVELOP ON ALLEGED LARAKI-BOUTEFLIKA CLASH.
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